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Cc: Grantham, Nancy[Grantham.Nancy@epa.gov]; Carey, Curtis[Carey.Curtis@epa.gov]
From: Durant, Jennah
Sent: Wed 8/26/2015 10:37:00 PM
Subject: FW: Gold King Mine inquiry

Inquiry below is requesting a statement on Sen. Barrasso's announcement for Senate Committee on Indian Affairs to hold a hearing in September.

<http://www.indian.senate.gov/news/press-release/chairman-barrasso-announces-scia-oversight-hearing-gold-king-mine-disaster%E2%80%99s>

Chairman Barrasso Announces SCIA Oversight Hearing on Gold King Mine Disaster's Impact on Indian Country

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Aug 26, 2015

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Today, U.S. Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs (SCIA), announced that the Committee would hold an oversight hearing titled the “EPA’s Gold King Mine Disaster: Examining the Harmful Impacts to Indian Country.” The hearing will take place at 2:15 PM on Wednesday, September 16, 2015 in the SCIA hearing room, 628 Senate Dirksen Office Building. The hearing will provide an opportunity for Committee Members to demand answers from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the impact of the Gold King Mine disaster on Indian Country.

SCIA Members Senator John McCain (R-AZ) and Senator Tom Udall (D-NM) had previously written a letter to Chairman Barrasso and Vice Chairman Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) requesting the hearing be held.

“The EPA must be held accountable for the release of contaminated and toxic waste water into the Animas River in Colorado and the San Juan River in New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah,” **said Chairman Barrasso.** “Tribes use the waters from these rivers and this hearing will be a good chance to hear firsthand how this disaster is impacting them. The EPA needs to work with these

tribes to ensure the mess is cleaned up, the sovereignty of the tribes is respected, and that the concerns of the tribes are acted on.”

“Water is our most valuable resource and we must do everything we can to protect it for future generations,” **said Vice Chairman Tester**. “I hope this hearing will help bring about solutions so we can clean up the land and water for Navajo Nation and all the folks impacted by this disaster.”

“I thank Chairman Barrasso and Vice Chairman Tester for agreeing to hold this oversight hearing on the impact of the EPA Gold King Mine spill on the Navajo Nation,” **said Senator McCain**. “I share serious concerns expressed by members of the Navajo Nation about the EPA’s response to this spill, and about the potential for toxic substances to flow onto the reservation’s lands and waters. Through this hearing, Congress will make sure that the EPA explains the public health, environmental, and economic costs of the spill, and its remediation plans, as well as addresses other problematic EPA activities involving the Navajo Nation.”

"I'm grateful for Chairman Barrasso and Vice Chairman Tester's responsiveness in pursuing a Senate Indian Affairs Committee oversight hearing on the impact of the EPA Gold King Mine Spill on the Navajo Nation," **said Senator Udall**. "Through my continued discussions with Navajo Nation leaders, I understand their dissatisfaction over EPA's response, and I share their concerns about the uncertainty of long-term contamination of land and water by the toxic mine drainage that was released. Congress has a responsibility to oversee the federal government’s response to this crisis, and the upcoming committee hearing will help ensure that EPA addresses the public health, environmental and economic costs of the spill. I look forward to working with the Navajo Nation on the recovery from this disaster and other important long-term efforts like the cleanup of abandoned uranium mines on the Navajo Nation."

From: Vidya Kauri [mailto:vidya.kauri@law360.com]
Sent: Wednesday, August 26, 2015 4:24 PM
To: Press
Subject: Gold King Mine inquiry

Hi,

I am a reporter with Law360 writing about Senator John Barrasso's announcement today to hold an oversight hearing in September over the Gold King Mine incident. Could you please let me know asap if the EPA has any comments to make regarding the senate committee hearing?

Thanks,

Vidya

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Vidya Kauri

Reporter

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